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Agenda item 118

# Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

## Report of the Fifth Committee

*Rapporteur*: Mrs. Denisa **Hutănová** (Slovakia)

## I. Introduction

1. At its 2nd plenary meeting, on 17 September 2004, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its fifty-ninth session the item entitled "Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services" and to allocate it to the Fifth Committee.

2. The Fifth Committee considered the item at its 18th, 19th, 20th, 22nd, 23rd and 33rd meetings, on 1, 3, 4, 9 and 11 November and on 22 December 2004. Statements and observations made in the course of the Committee's consideration of the item are reflected in the relevant summary records (A/C.5/59/SR.18, 19, 20, 22, 23 and 33).

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the annual report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services for the period from 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004 (A/59/359);

(b) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the annual report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services for the period from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003 (A/58/364);

(c) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on its audit of the regional commissions (A/58/785);

(d) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the review of the structure and operations of the United Nations information centres (A/57/747 and Corr.1).

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## II. Consideration of draft resolutions A/C.5/59/L.17 and A/C.5/59/L.18

4. At its 33rd meeting, on 22 December, the Committee had before it two draft resolutions, entitled "Reports of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services" (A/C.5/59/L.17) and "Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services" (A/C.5/59/L.18), which were submitted by the Chairman on the basis of informal consultations coordinated by the representative of Nigeria.

5. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolutions A/C.5/59/L.17 (draft resolution I) and A/C.5/59/L.18 (draft resolution II) without a vote (see para. 7).

6. After the adoption of the draft resolutions, statements in explanation of position were made by the representatives of Australia (on behalf of Australia, Canada and New Zealand), the United States of America, the Netherlands (on behalf of the European Union), Switzerland, Japan, Cuba, the Syrian Arab Republic, India and Turkey.

## III. Recommendation of the Fifth Committee

7. The Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

### Draft resolution I
### Reports of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

*The General Assembly*,

*Recalling* its resolutions 48/218 B of 29 July 1994 and 54/244 of 23 December 1999,

*Recalling also* its resolutions 56/246 of 24 December 2001 and 58/101 B of 9 December 2003,

*Having considered* the annual report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services for the period 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003[1] and the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the review of the structure and operations of United Nations information centres,[2]

1. *Notes with appreciation* the work of the Office of Internal Oversight Services;

2. *Takes note* of the annual report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services;[1]

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that the Office of Internal Oversight Services continues to provide internal oversight of the entire claims process of the United Nations Compensation Commission and to report regularly thereon in the context of the annual report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services;

4. *Recalls* rule 1.2 of the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, and requests the Secretary-General to provide information to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session in the context of its consideration of matters related to procurement reform on actions taken to prevent recurrence of incidents of possible conflict of interest and inappropriate procurement practices;

5. *Notes* the description of the mission of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, as outlined in its annual report, and in this regard stresses that the mission of the Office should be in full conformity with its mandate, as approved in its resolution 48/218 B;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees develops and utilizes comprehensive policy guidelines for the selection and management of consultants to ensure transparency and objectivity in their engagement, monitoring and evaluation as well as to make greater efforts to ensure a geographical balance in the use of qualified

[1] A/58/364.
[2] A/57/747 and Corr.1.

consultants, in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session;

7. *Endorses* the relevant recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services regarding improvement of internal controls in management, accounting and reporting of assets of all United Nations field missions to establish reliable records, and requests the Secretary-General to ensure their full implementation and to report thereon to the General Assembly at the second part of its resumed sixtieth session;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to codify appropriate procedures for the purchase and utilization of vehicles and other equipment by United Nations field missions to ensure compliance by all missions with the procedures and to report thereon to the General Assembly at the second part of its resumed sixtieth session;

9. *Notes with concern* the contents of paragraph 97 of the annual report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the management and control of United Nations laissez-passer, and requests the Secretary-General to ensure the development of appropriate Organization-wide rules, policies and procedures for managing laissez-passer and to report thereon to the General Assembly, as appropriate;

10. *Recalls* paragraph 38 of General Assembly resolution 58/101 B, and takes note of the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the review of the structure and operations of United Nations information centres.[2]

## Draft resolution II
## Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

*The General Assembly*,

*Recalling* its resolutions 48/218 B of 29 July 1994 and 54/244 of 23 December 1999,

*Having considered* the annual report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services for the period 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004,[1]

1. *Notes with appreciation* the work of the Office of Internal Oversight Services;

2. *Takes note* of the annual report of the Office;[1]

3. *Notes* the description of the mission of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, as outlined in the annual report, and in this regard stresses that the mission of the Office should be in full conformity with its mandate as approved in General Assembly resolution 48/218 B;

4. *Notes* the information provided by the Office on the economies and savings generated by its recommendations, and requests the Office to explain its guidelines for measuring the impact of such economies and or savings and to report to the General Assembly thereon in its next annual report;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General, with regard to paragraph 53 of the annual report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, to ensure strict conformity with the highest standards of quality when recruiting staff to fill language posts, in accordance with legislative mandates;

6. *Notes with concern* the findings of the Office on investigations, as reflected in paragraphs 42 to 47 of its annual report, as well as the fact that some of them reflect serious managerial problems and lack of control;

7. *Stresses*, in this regard, the crucial importance of establishing an effective and efficient system of accountability throughout the Secretariat in order to prevent such problems and to make programme managers accountable;

8. *Takes note* of the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the audit of the regional commissions,[2] and requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session on the actions taken by the legislative bodies of the regional commissions with regard to the recommendations of the report;

9. *Takes note also* of paragraph 63 of the annual report, relating to the audit of the non-governmental organization accreditation process;

10. *Reiterates*, in the context of paragraphs 8 and 9 above, paragraph 8 of its resolution 54/244, in which it emphasized that the approval, change and discontinuation of legislative mandates are the exclusive prerogatives of intergovernmental legislative bodies;

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[1] See A/59/359.

[2] A/58/785.

11. *Concurs* with the observation of the Office of Internal Oversight Services in paragraph 55 of its annual report, and requests the Secretary-General to ensure that the Office continues to provide internal oversight of the entire claims process of the United Nations Compensation Commission and to report regularly thereon in the context of the annual reports of the Office.